Modern governments are connected to deliver better experiences

Focus on people for your digital transformation

Growing demand for positive digital experiences

Denise is a single mother in a large metro city who desperately needs food and healthcare benefits for her family. She has to find childcare, borrow money for bus fare, and travel 90 minutes each way to service centers to apply. Once Denise arrives, Maria, her Medicaid caseworker, has three people ahead of her. Then she has to travel to two other locations and experience similar waits to start her application from scratch with three program caseworkers for each additional benefit. If the state had a mobile app and integrated service delivery, Denise could work a full day and avoid the day-long trip. Maria and the other caseworkers would find Denise's applications in their task queues so they would be approved faster.

Expectations and experiences often shape how people like Denise evaluate relationships in our digitally-enabled, customer-driven world. Residents and businesses expect reliable, seamless, always-available services whether they order from an online retailer or apply for state medical assistance. Governments should help people feel safe, secure, and respected in these moments that matter. In many cases, they are not. In a recent study, only 38 percent of people feel like a valued customer when dealing with the government.[1]

In order for governments to serve citizens' needs, they should focus on digitizing the experiences that matter to their citizens. Government leaders need to clearly understand people's needs with each experience. They also must deliver on these needs fast and in ways people can be productive. However, 47 percent of senior executives say the lack of IT modernization is holding agencies back from keeping pace with citizen expectations.[2]

How do federal, state, and local governments focus on the right things to catch up and modernize faster?

Why modern government is important

Government agencies in the U.S. must modernize in order to keep up with changing user needs, regulations, and health and public safety requirements. Leaders of modern governments rethink business processes and service delivery models to more effectively achieve their mission. This article is one of a series that features how modernizing affects the government workforce and the user experience, improves security and public trust, and accelerates the digital journey. KPMG team members offer insights intended to help guide governments in their modernization efforts to encompass all processes, technologies, policies, and the workforce so each works together to create connected, powered, and trusted organizations.

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1 "Impacts of COVID-19 on digital transformation strategies and the future of work," Forrester Consulting and KPMG, July 2020.

2 "Impacts of COVID-19 on digital transformation strategies and the future of work," Forrester Consulting and KPMG, July 2020.

Fulfill people's needs

Organizations that only focus on processes and technology in their digital journeys rarely achieve the outcomes they need. The people involved throughout the experience when citizens interact with governments are critical. These people include citizens, employees who serve citizens, administrators who serve employees, and third parties who work closely with governments.

Digital applications that provide a positive user experience benefit everyone. When a citizen experience is well-designed, employees and third parties work more efficiently, require less training, are happier, and deliver higher-quality, more consistent services. They are also able to better serve citizens. Self-service access allows citizens such as Denise to get the help they need when they need it, which contributes to more successful outcomes for citizens and their families. For governments, self-service is more cost-effective. Employees and third parties also enjoy fewer basic inquiries in call centers and in-service locations, which frees them to focus on more important issues.

Human-centered design, rooted in compassion, empathy, and specifics based on various target audiences, helps leaders understand people's needs, behaviors, and expectations. This knowledge allows governments to create rich, efficient, human-centered experiences.

Tips to fulfill needs:

— Identify your main user groups
(e.g, employees, citizens, third-parties)

— Talk to your main user groups to learn what they expect when they interact with governments, the processes they currently follow, and their limitations. Understand what they care about.

— Use this information to build the experience roadmap described in the next section.

— Seek input from user groups during any change implementation to confirm the solution will meet their expectations.

District of Columbia residents manage benefits with easy self-service app

More than 250,000 District of Columbia (D.C.) residents depend on the District for vital cash, food, and health benefits. D.C. Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) in collaboration with the Department of Human Services (DHS) were in the middle of a system modernization effort with KPMG when COVID-19 hit. Until then, residents had to go in person to service centers or phone into a call center to manage benefits. With service centers closing and the need for benefits surging, call volumes skyrocketed. D.C. DHS leaders and KPMG changed focus overnight: mobile-first.

KPMG developed a new mobile platform that provides an easy, self-service way for D.C. residents to apply for, recertify, and update their human services benefits. The KPMG team used an agile approach to develop the mobile solution. The agile approach allowed the District to monitor progress and reduce functional and design gaps, especially important to avoid benefits interruptions and keep residents safer during the pandemic. KPMG used a human-centric design and change management approach to create a smooth digital experience for caseworkers and residents. The platform integrates with the case management system so caseworkers have fewer manual processes and can more efficiently and effectively serve residents.

Residents quickly adopted the mobile app, with over 50,000 downloads to date, consistent 4.6 to 4.7 ratings in the Apple and Google Play stores, and effusive reviews online. The benefits of the digital transformation of services continue to be felt by the residents of D.C. and the government agencies.

Start small and move fast

A good approach to big goals is to start small with the outcome in mind. Following are some exercises so the digital journey does not become overwhelming. Completing these will allow you to break the work required to reach each outcome into smaller, achievable increments. Your organization can identify valuable information so you can address dependencies and data sources over time. Finally, these exercises will help align your organization so everyone drives toward the same outcomes.
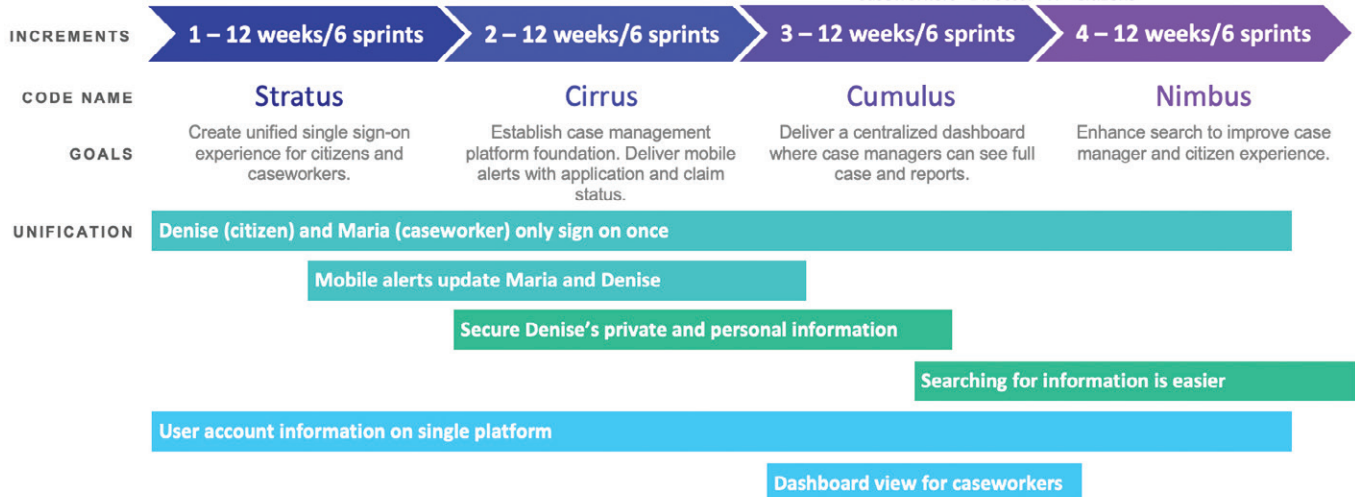
Tips to start small:

— Evaluate the agency's mission, long-term plan, and user feedback to identify a few needs or opportunities that could improve citizens' and employees' outcomes.

— Describe the outcome you hope to achieve by addressing these needs. These outcomes should be specific, measurable, and meaningful. Use these needs and outcomes to shape your strategy.

— Chart the process from the beginning of the user experience through resolution (using information gathered in the previous section) to create an experience roadmap.

— Prioritize tasks in a 3-, 6-, and 12-month implementation roadmap to chart your journey based on the complexity and value of each mapped process to the user and your agency.

Benefits mobile app design Strategic Roadmap

This example Strategic Roadmap plots the benefit mobile app features mentioned in this article across project phases. The roadmap helps developers and leaders schedule and prioritize based on need and resource availability.

Priority personas

Caseworkers Director IT Citizens

INCREMENTS	1 – 12 weeks/6 sprints	2 – 12 weeks/6 sprints	3 – 12 weeks/6 sprints	4 – 12 weeks/6 sprints
CODE NAME	Stratus	Cirrus	Cumulus	Nimbus
GOALS	Create unified single sign-on experience for citizens and caseworkers.	Establish case management platform foundation. Deliver mobile alerts with application and claim status.	Deliver a centralized dashboard where case managers can see full case and reports.	Enhance search to improve case manager and citizen experience.

UNIFICATION

Denise (citizen) and Maria (caseworker) only sign on once

Mobile alerts update Maria and Denise

Secure Denise's private and personal information

Searching for information is easier

User account information on single platform

Dashboard view for caseworkers

Deliver solutions that meet users' needs faster

With limited budgets and growing digital services demand, governments have to deliver digital solutions fast so employees can be productive and citizens can access services. Many organizations follow defined approaches such as waterfall or agile to develop and deliver technology solutions. A waterfall approach focuses less on the end user and more on following structured development phases. An agile method can speed up outcomes and help ensure they meet users' expectations since the approach focuses on continuous improvement and how technology affects people.

For example, if Denise's state government used an agile approach to build a self-service benefit management app, they would have short development cycles and deliver smaller functions every few months. This method allows developers to determine what works and what does not. Then they address users' needs in the next release in a couple of months rather than waiting until they complete the entire app years later.

The agile approach also allows government clients to monitor progress, identify enhancement opportunities, and reduce functional and design gaps so the outcomes meet expectations. It also sets them up to more easily scale and add functions so they are prepared for the next opportunity or crisis.

Tips for more effective methods:

— Evaluate your methods to make sure they meet users' needs and today's fast-changing digital environment.
— Determine what approach will work within your culture.
— Explore adopting agile development methods to better meet employee and citizen needs.

U.S. healthcare agency modernizes HR systems to enhance public services

Leaders of a federal healthcare agency envisioned a central place where employees could complete multiple human resource (HR) actions in order to simplify daily tasks. Systems were too old to connect and operate like they should, so they brought KPMG in to help the department modernize.

The KPMG team started with a crucial step of any modernization journey, learning what the agency needed to achieve and its pain points, policies, and limitations. Then we completed a human-centered design study to learn employees' daily tasks and considered new processes that would streamline their work. We collaborated with a number of other federal agencies to create and prioritize an HR process automation roadmap. The effort included innovative cloud technology, robotic process automation, and functional software.

Modernizing created a customer-centric HR function. More than 88,000 agency and non- agency employees use 14 new automated processes for recruitment, performance management, employee relations, common forms, and more formerly manual tasks. Our team used human-centered design to build a holistic solution that led to a simpler, more efficient work experience with better communication. Using robotic process automation to automate repetitive functions saved employees 13,000 hours and helped the agency avoid $800,000 in costs to date. These agencies that use the new HR function are also prepared for the unexpected such as work-from-home or hybrid environments where employees and citizens completely rely on digital operations.

Embrace innovation and agility

Government employees along with citizens, residents, and businesses are governments' customers. Competition doesn't exist like in the private sector, but people do make choices. People are taxpayers and voters. Employees have alternatives. Governments owe all people positive experiences. It is up to you to use the tips from this article and take the first small steps and work fast to deliver those positive experiences. Contact KPMG so we can show you how your experience design journey looks in our Strategic Roadmap.

About KPMG

KPMG has worked with federal, state, and local governments for more than a century, so we know how agencies work. Our team understands the unique issues, pressures, and challenges you encounter in the journey to modernize. We draw on our government operations knowledge to offer methodologies tailored to help you overcome these challenges and work with you from beginning to end to deliver the results that matter.

The KPMG team starts with the business issue before we determine the solution because we understand the ultimate mission. When the way people work changes, our team brings the leading training practices to make sure your employees have the right knowledge and skills. We also help your people get value out of technology while also assisting with cloud, advanced analytics, intelligent automation, and cybersecurity. Our passion is to create value, inspire trust, and help government clients deliver better experiences to workers, citizens, and communities.

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